

## Middle East Women Lawyers Meet U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer



WILpower participants, MEPI Project Officer and AED Staff meet with Justice Stephen Breyer, September 30, 2009.

Attribution: Kit Bartels, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, U.S. Dep't of State

Washington, D.C. - The MEPI Women in Law Program (WILpower) brought winners of the May 2009 Middle East regional Moot Court Competitions, featured in the [MEPI July Newsletter](#), to Washington, D.C. to learn about the U.S. legal system and see American legal procedures in action. This program took place September 26 through October 3 and included four ambitious female lawyers from UAE, West Bank, and Lebanon, and one promising law student from Kuwait.

The WILpower Washington program scheduled several high-level meetings for participants, including a tour of the U.S. Supreme Court, a briefing on the U.S. legal system with a Supreme Court Fellow, and a 45-minute private chat with Supreme Court Justice Stephen

Breyer. Justice Breyer took the opportunity to explain how the U.S. judicial system and Supreme Court fit into the U.S. democratic system. Producing a small copy of the U.S. Constitution from his shirt pocket, he explained to the participants that he strictly adheres to the letter of the law according to our Constitution, but he also keeps in mind that his decisions affect the lives of millions of people. He encouraged the lawyers to be open-minded and remember that the law is just as much about people as it is about logic.

The group also visited the U.S. Department of State, where they participated in a roundtable with women leaders from Secretary Clinton's Policy and Planning Team, Special Envoy Mitchell's staff, and the Office of Global Women's Issues. Participants shared their experiences as young legal practitioners in the region and highlighted the need for more practical skills training, English language legal coursework, and mentorship.

In addition to these high-level engagements, participants attended law school classes at Georgetown and American Universities, met with lawyers at NGOs, shadowed associates at law firms, visited the D.C. Public Defender Service, and received a briefing from the Federal Justice Center on the selection and training process of U.S. judges. Participants were given a firsthand look at the U.S. legal system in action during visits to the District Superior Court, a local jail and a police precinct for a "ride around" - where participants were assigned to shadow an active duty police officer for several hours.

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Complementing their legal experience, U.S. families hosted participants nightly for additional exposure to American culture. On their last day, the women shared their experiences during a reception at AED. Please click [here](#) to meet four of the visiting WILpower lawyers and hear more about their experiences with the WILpower program.

The WILpower program is implemented by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), a nonprofit organization working globally to improve education, health, civil society and economic development. In addition to providing quality practical legal training to develop women lawyers' research, writing, oral pleading, and business skills, WILpower helps participants build regional information and communication networks for young female lawyers in the Middle East to support their professional development. WILpower began last year in Kuwait, Lebanon, and the West Bank, and will soon be expanded throughout the region.

Look for updates on [mepi.state.gov](http://mepi.state.gov) in the coming weeks to learn more about how participants are applying their WILpower skills to empower themselves and others.

### MEPI Welcomes Next Group of Tomorrow's Leaders!



**Representatives from MEPI, AUC, LAU, and AMIDEAST, as well as Cohort 2 of Tomorrow's Leaders Program pose for a picture on Sep. 8, 2009 in Cairo, Egypt.**

*Attribution: Meghan Gladden, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, U.S. Dep't of State*

Cairo, Egypt - In early September, the American University in Cairo (AUC) hosted a welcome ceremony for its second round of scholarship recipients in MEPI's Tomorrow's Leaders program. Representatives from MEPI, AMIDEAST, and participating universities were in attendance.

The Tomorrow's Leaders program, launched in 2007, gives underprivileged students from the Middle East and North Africa a chance to attend one of three top universities in the region: AUC; the American University in Beirut (AUB); or the Lebanese American University (LAU). Each year, AMIDEAST recruits a new cohort of students from a new set of countries. This year, the three universities welcomed participants from Bahrain, Tunisia,

Lebanon, and Iraq. These students, in addition to last year's participants from Yemen, Egypt, Qatar, and the West Bank/Gaza, bring a strong element of diversity to each campus. While at the universities, the students participate in activities that enhance their leadership abilities, equipping them with a new set of skills as they return to their home countries following graduation.

The welcome ceremony coincided with the conclusion of the 1st Annual Tomorrow's Leaders Best Practices Conference. With the Tomorrow's Leaders program entering its second year, MEPI and the implementing partners took advantage of the event to discuss best practices, their experiences with the Tomorrow's Leaders Program, and how to improve it moving forward.

### Libyan Media Professionals Embark on a 10-day Journey in the U.S.



**Three members of Libya's General People's Committee For Foreign Liaison & International Cooperation Foreign Media Corporation attend the U.S. State Department Daily Press Briefing on September 28, 2009**

*Attribution: Kelley Osterthaler, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, U.S. Dep't of State*

Washington, D.C. - Three Libyan Public Information Officers affiliated with the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs arrived in Washington, D.C. on September 28 as part of a 10-day study tour on media and government relations in the United States. The participants met with their counterparts in the State Department's Office for Press and Public Diplomacy, and attended the State Department Daily Press Briefing on Monday, September 28th. Throughout the week, they met with American and foreign journalists based in the U.S. and toured local media outlets, including Politico.com and NPR. The goal of the study tour is to provide the participants with an overview of the U.S. media environment, with a focus on how our government disseminates information to the press and to the public. As Libya's media sector opens up, the government should expect many requests for information from all over the world. It is crucial that Libya develop institutions that facilitate free, independent, and accurate news coverage. This program is meant to assist in that process.

The study tour was organized by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) and supported by MEPI.

## FEATURES

### JCEF and MEPI Help 60 Jordanian Youths Find Employment



Program participants pose for a picture with JCEF and CCC implementers. August 29, 2009.

Attribution: Mayyada Abu-Jaber, CEO of JCEF provided photo to MEPI office of

Amman, Jordan – As a catalyst for Jordan's economic progress, the Jordan Career Education Foundation (JCEF) recently celebrated the graduation of 60 youth that will move into guaranteed job placements in the surveying and hospitality sectors. To qualify for job placement assistance, the 60 participants successfully completed the JCEF Workplace Success Program, which consists of training and job-placement programs directed toward unemployed youth in Jordan. At an Iftar graduation ceremony held on Saturday August 29th, 2009, JCEF commemorated the graduation of these hard-working participants.

Many program supporters attended the ceremony, including private sector employers and surveyor program funders, Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC)

Regional HR manager Mr. Joe Domani, JCEF Program Coordinator at CCC, Ms. Suzan Samara, and Jordanian Ministry of Labour's National Training & Employment Project (NTEP) Deputy Director Shawkat Ababneh.

Scholarships for the JCEF Workplace Success Program were provided by the NTEP, and during the ceremony Mr. Ababneh said, "Our program focuses on giving equal opportunities to various social segments in Jordan. It constitutes an important element of the community outreach initiative, targeting poverty pockets, thus enabling our potential graduates to sustain their living and aid their families upon graduation and during their job placements." In addition, JCEF CEO Mayyada Abu-Jaber noted that JCEF's youth employment mission depends on the active support of the private sector partners such as Consolidated Contractors Company, which runs the 400 hours of technical training and 60 hours of workplace success skills to train underprivileged, unemployed youth.

The graduating youth are tracked by JCEF at their workplaces at the three month, six month, and one year marks as part of the alumni monitoring and support system. Two groups of youth will be placed in the hospitality sector at the Blue Fig Restaurants. This is the second time youth will be employed at Blue Fig Restaurants, placements made possible through a three-way partnership between JCEF, Blue Fig Restaurants and NTEP. The agreement requires that NTEP pay 50% of the salary of the youth for six months while JCEF continues to train them on the skills necessary to retain their jobs with Blue Fig Restaurants. The third group of graduates is headed for various 5-star hotels in Jordan with the help of the Jordan River Foundation Youth Career Initiative.

In 2006, [Education for Employment](#) (EFE) established JCEF, a national initiative to create job opportunities for youth through employer-driven training programs. JCEF partners with local businesses to identify their specific needs, then works with national and international academic partners to design tailored courses so that students will have relevant, employable skills. Upon graduating, students are placed directly in jobs.

## MEPI in the Press

2008 LBP Alumna Aysha Al Mudehki, from Qatar, is featured in Businessweek Magazine

[http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/09/0930\\_dschool\\_alumni/2.htm](http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/09/0930_dschool_alumni/2.htm)

Ambassador Erel at the U.S. Embassy in Bahrain hosts a luncheon for MEPI Legal and Business Fellowship Alumni

<http://bahrain.usembassy.gov/luncheon.html>

Gulf Daily News reports on the Businesswomen's Network in Bahrain

<http://gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=260757>

The Other Arab World

<http://www.californiachronicle.com/articles/yb/135999300>

## Announcements

### Leaders for Democracy Fellowship Program

The Middle East Partnership Initiative is pleased to announce it is accepting applications for candidates to participate in the Leaders for Democracy Fellowship Program. This annual program will provide young civic and democratic reform leaders from the Middle East and North Africa with the opportunity to complete both academic coursework and a practical, skill-building experience as well as networking with like-minded reformers and activists inside and outside the region. The fellowship will cover international and domestic travel, health insurance, housing, and a moderate living stipend. Interested applicants should submit no later than October 16, 2009.

For more information on this opportunity please visit <https://mepialumni.state.gov>

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### Request for Applications: New Empowerment Communication Technologies

On June 4 in Cairo, President Obama called for a broader engagement and a "new beginning" to relations between the United States and Muslim communities around the world. As part of that commitment, the President outlined expanded U.S. support for online learning, networking, and partnership among a range of stakeholders. In support of the President's vision, the Office of the Partnership Initiative (NEA/PI) announces an open competition seeking pilot proposals that will leverage innovative new technologies to connect people – particularly youth – in order to expand civic participation, increase new media capabilities for civil society, and enhance online educational opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It is in this spirit that NEA/PI seeks applications for the following three priority areas:

- A) Social Networking.
- B) Increasing New Media Capabilities of Civil Society.
- C) Enhancing Online Learning.

For more information, please visit: <http://mepi.state.gov/opportunities>

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### Request for Applications: Saudi Arabia Women's Civic Participation, Judicial Engagement, and Governance and Public Management Fellowships

The Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative announces an open competition for proposals to strengthen women's participation, governance, and judicial capacity in Saudi Arabia. This call is consistent with the President's message of supporting women's rights and improving good governance and rule of law at all levels. In Cairo this June, the President emphasized that "our daughters can contribute just as much to society as our sons." A month later in Accra, he stated that "America will... increase assistance for responsible individuals and responsible institutions, with a focus on supporting good governance; on the rule of law, which ensures the equal administration of justice; on civic participation, so that young people get involved ...." The President also remarked that "development depends on good governance" - an "ingredient which has been missing in far too many places, for far too long." It is in this spirit that NEA/PI seeks applications for the following three priority areas:

- A) Saudi Women's Civic Participation.
- B) Saudi Judicial Engagement
- C) Saudi Governance and Public Management Fellowship.

For more information please visit <http://mepi.state.gov/opportunities>

To find out about more MEPI news and upcoming events please visit: <http://mepi.state.gov/>